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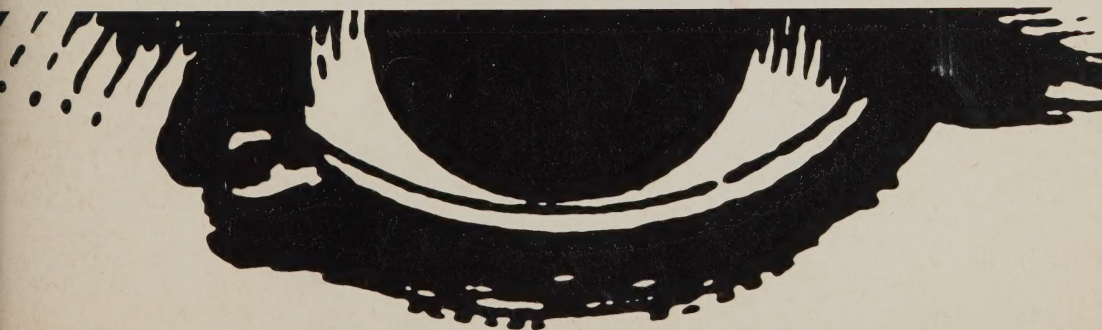
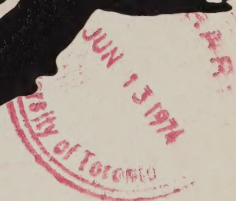
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Behind the Third Eye

A Portapak Handbook



Gouvernement
Publications



Behind the Third Eye

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Utilization Project Officers

The Ontario Educational Communications Authority

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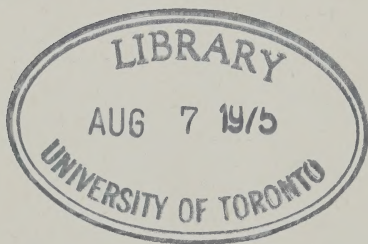
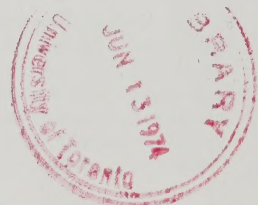


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The predecessor to this booklet, *The Third Eye*, was designed as a primer for teachers introducing the portapak to school children. The assumption that booklet makes about children is best expressed by Nicos Kazantzakis' reminiscences on childhood in his literary voyage *Report to Greco*:

"Truly what miracles are the child's mind, eyes and ears! How insatiably they gobble down this world and fill themselves . . . All creatures — animals, trees, men, stones; everything: forms, colors, voices, smells, lightning flashes — flow unexplained in front of the child's eyes (no, not in front of them, inside them) . . ."

The Third Eye didn't have to suggest means to encourage the child to look at his world; it was necessary only to allude to ways in which the child could bring about some order to the chaos of external reality. But as children mature, something happens to their sense of wonder about the world around them. It's lost — and one wonders whether it is attributable to chemistry, pedagogy, or both.

Jorge Luis Borges, a contemporary writer, has reflected that unless the individual is struck by the notion that he lives behind his eyes, he will take the universe for granted. A re-awakening occurs the first time the secondary school student views on the monitor what he has shot with the portapak. Not only is the student astonished at what he has seen behind the lens, but he is startled by the forgotten fact that he does see, that he is a sentient being.

Behind the Third Eye, then, is a reaffirmation — that learning is a process of living behind one's eye.

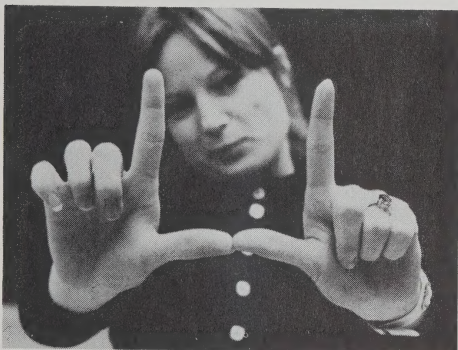
So the Portapak's Coming Tuesday

What do you do on Monday or on any day (or days) before you get the portapak?

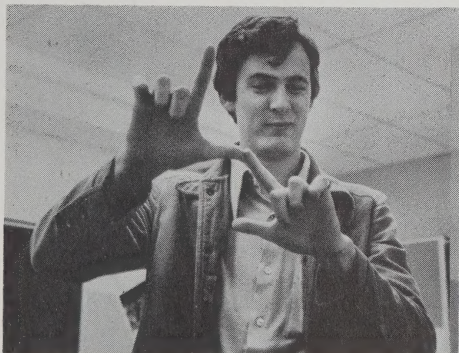
Think pictures.

Much can be done, indeed should be done, before any video equipment is used in class. Plan; get ideas; look at lots of stock and still shots; watch programs; find out about cameras and angles. Build some scripts.

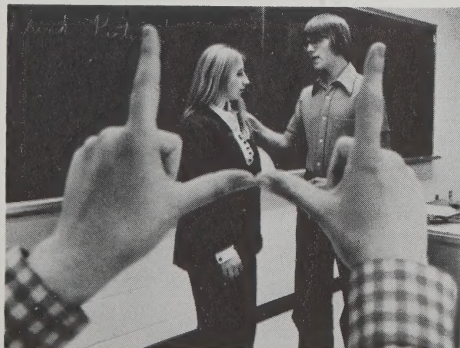
But first, learn about shots and angles.



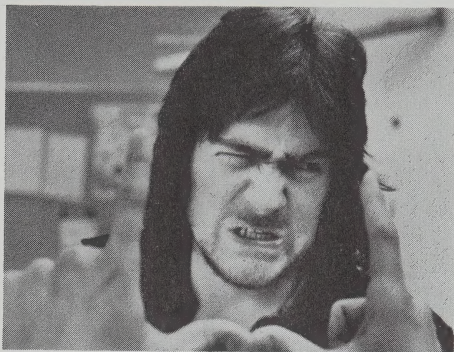
Make a frame. Look through it and practise basic shots.



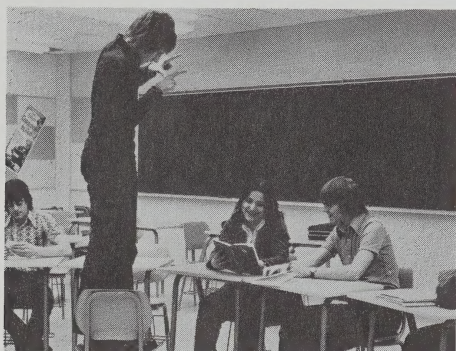
There's one in every class.



Medium shot (M.S.)



Close-up (C.U.)



Work the angles.

High angle



Low angle

Build a three-shot script involving the whole class. Let the class suggest a common situation and three volunteers walk through it. They then suggest ideas for an opening, middle and closing shot.

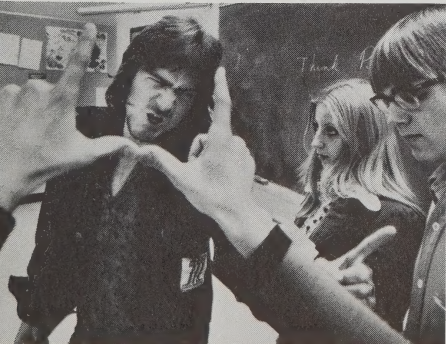
Boy talks to girl and her boyfriend appears on the scene.



Shot 1: Opening shot



Shot 2: Middle



Shot 3: Closing

Walk through several situations (borrowing the family car, bringing a report home, copying homework in class, etc.). Keep the situations simple, short and involve several students as actors, cameramen and script writers. More shots can be filled in as the script develops.

The class might discuss or work out briefly the difference between blocking the action for stage and for picture. For pictures in television or films, *details* are important: hands, faces, objects.

You are now ready to build a script for a very simple drama. A card game can form the basis of a good scenario for pictures. The actions — and reactions — lend themselves much better to television or film than to stage.

The class divides into several groups with actors (card players), a director and a cameraman who “frames” the action and a script writer who lists the shots in a television script outline on the chalkboard.

	Video	Audio
Shot		
1		
2		
3		
etc.		

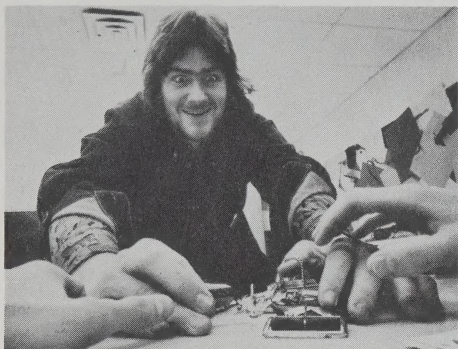
“The Cheat” was a version done in one class.



The director plans shots,
And the writer lists them.

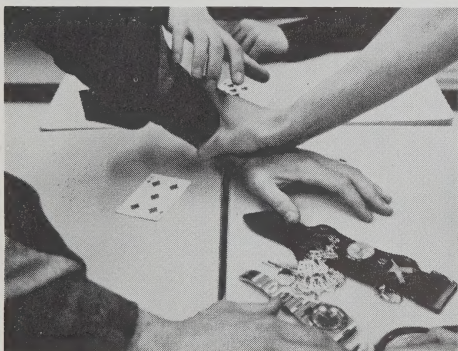


The director guides the group through the actions.

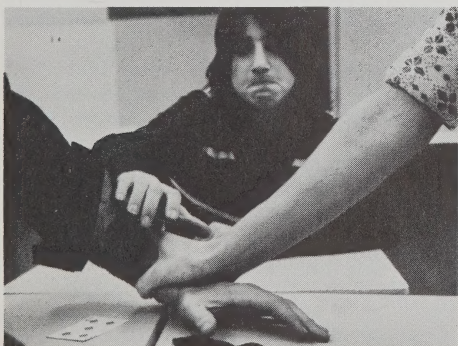


The Cheat
5 shots — a good beginning

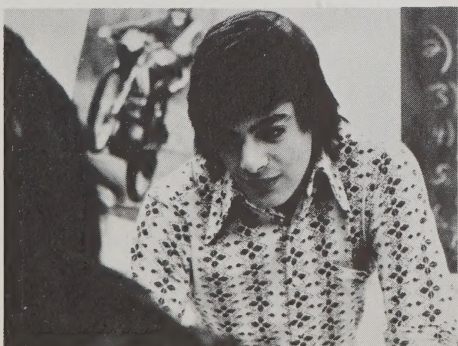
He reaches



— oops!



He's caught,



accused,



guilty!

Other groups will plan different sequences and have other ideas about shots and angles.



Build scripts by beginning with the simple and the familiar. The importance of planning and rehearsing is evident when you realize there will be only one camera.

Going Down the Lens

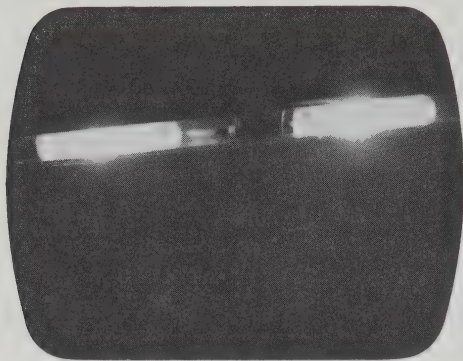


If you take longer than ten minutes to brief the class or a group on the operation of the portapak, you will have been talking too long.

Begin with the lens and point out two of its three components: the aperture and focus. Disregard the indices imprinted on the adjustable lens rings. The f-stops (aperture settings) and distance scales are superfluous because the subject is previewed through the electronic viewfinder. When the image contrast in the viewfinder suits the cameraman's taste, the manually operated aperture is properly set; when the image is sharp, the focus control is correctly set.

Don't bother about the zoom, the third component; it's conspicuous enough to be discovered seconds after the students handle the camera. Because people think out loud their first time with the portapak, neglect mentioning the camera microphone so that you and the class will have a candid, recorded commentary of the difficulties encountered in the field. Use the impromptu comments for the debriefing session.

To nigger about tape threading, head cleaning and battery charging at this stage is to delay needlessly their hands-on experience. Simply show them how to switch the VTR to the record mode, how to activate and de-activate the tape drive, and how to turn the unit off. If, for example, you now reveal the playback feature in the viewfinder, the group will replay and re-tape their shots and in the process, wear down the battery before each member has had a chance to handle the camera.



Sequence



Con-sequence

There is one warning that must be repeated. Never point the camera — whether the portapak is turned on or off — at the sun, at bright lights or reflections of either on polished surfaces.

There are unalterable consequences of shooting into a bright light source. First, the videocon tube will be permanently burned and all subsequent shots replayed on the monitor will bear a black impression in the configuration of the pass the camera has made on the light spot. And, when that happens, the portapak probably will be consigned only to administrators for recording such scintillating events as the open house, assemblies and maybe even a volleyball game.

Nothing is more inimical to learning than the inflexible timetable and the portapak is going to prove discomfiting to those who stick to a 37-minute period. Some projects involving the portapak may require minutes, while others will have to be sustained for several uninterrupted periods of daylight or rescheduled during times of inclement weather. The first two contracts (or assignments), however, will only nibble at the timetable which acknowledges the fractional hour.

If you have one portapak, form a crew of ten students. Send them outside the building to tape whatever they wish within a half-hour time span. With an additional fifteen minutes for playback and evaluation, this time frame will suffice to familiarize the students with the mechanics of handling the camera.

As soon as the crew has returned from the field, play back the tape in its entirety to the whole class. Now replay the tape, and using the "freeze frame", isolate some shots which demonstrate control of a subject and others which lack finesse. Identify the technical problems associated with focusing, lighting and movement, and let the class suggest corrective measures. The debriefing will be marked by quiet fascination and light-hearted humour. But, should you opt to skip this play-with-the-toy contract, the following bumbles are going to persist in slipping into subsequent contracts like air bubbles in wet wallpaper.



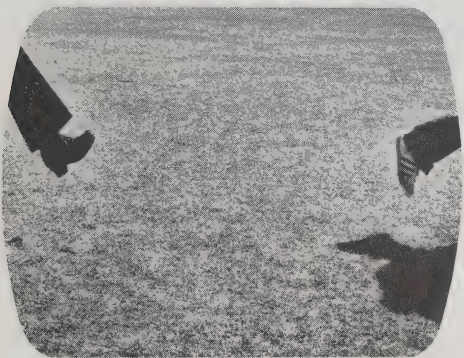
Hoof shot

This cinéma vérité sequence lasts anywhere from 15 seconds to 5 minutes. The cameraman has inadvertently triggered the camera while carrying the portapak. Then he sights a subject he wants, he presses the trigger, and . . .



Hood shot

Lighting conditions are highly variegated outdoors — and indoors, for that matter. Strong backlighting invariably causes silhouetting with the portapak because of a device in the camera called the electronic gain control which overrides the manual aperture. A good effect here, nevertheless.



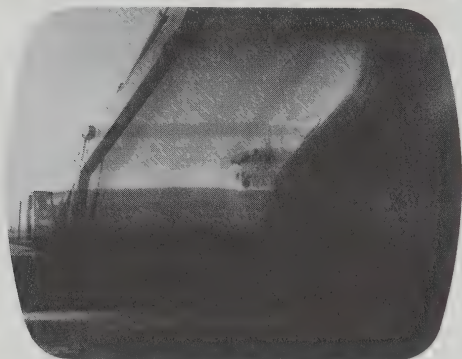
Scuttle shot

When attempting to capture random motion or unpredictable behaviour, shoot with both eyes open to take advantage of peripheral vision. Jerky camera movement will be virtually eliminated the second outing. And, remind the girls to leave their purses behind the next time — they have enough to carry.



Viral shot

The predator perched somewhere in this tree is ready to pounce on a grain-gorged mouse. There is as much chance of identifying the subject at this distance on the 11" monitor as there is of identifying a virus with a magnifying glass.



Zip pan

Zip panning manifests the initiate's frenetic attempt to cope with the visual stimuli bursting upon the brain. It would be redundant to point out the fault. But, be encouraged; the portapak is working.

Correcting Some Focus Problems

The zoom lens is an optical marvel as forgiving as it is demanding, and if the novice understands some of the factors affecting focus, he (or she) may then manipulate the controls to create the effect he wishes such as blurring background and foreground, defocusing the subject, softening the image, etc. But leave the esoteric science of optics to the 35 mm buffs and reduce the handling of zoom to general rules of thumb.

Aside from the focusing ring, the aperture and focal length of the lens affect focus. The aperture not only controls the amount of light striking the videcon, it also regulates the depth of field. Conversely, in bright light more objects at various distances from the camera can be kept in focus as the aperture must be closed down. In the wide angle setting (zoom-out position), the greater is the depth of field; in the telephoto setting (zoom-in position), the more restricted the depth of field. So to avoid fiddling with the focus while shooting, simply state:

- the more the light, the greater the depth of field;
- the wider the angle, the greater the depth of field.



Travel in

This shot was taken in the low light of a corridor and the aperture was wide open at $f/2$. While in focus at 10 feet, the subject went out of focus as the cameraman stepped three feet closer. There are four ways to overcome this problem:



- Choose a setting with brighter light.
- Step closer with a wide angle setting.
- Anticipate the problem and respond with the focus control.
- Zoom-in instead of travelling-in.



Zoom-in focused wide

"But we zoomed-in instead of moving in and we still go out of focus every time."



The simple solution is to first focus on the subject in the intended zoom-in frame before taping; then zoom-out, start taping and zoom-in to the original close-up position. Sharpness will be maintained all the while without readjustment to the focus setting.



Zoom-in focused tight



Your World and Welcome to It

A definition of a novice cameraman is a biped with a bipod mind set. If you skipped Chapter 2, most of the shots your students taped their first time out were probably taken at eye level from a stationary position and the sound track likely recorded the cameraman frantically trying to orchestrate people before the camera. Though they will have panned and zoomed, such concepts as travelling and extreme angles are not yet in their lexicon of perception. Having sat for years in front of a television receiver, they will expect things to happen for them.

Some may complain that there is nothing worth taping around the school, that the surroundings are boring. The state of boredom betrays the habit of perceiving phenomena the same way. Reality, as neutral as the blank tape in the videorecorder, awaits to be depicted in as many ways as the different attitudinal and physical stances assumed by the perceiver. Fine. But the class is going to have to be convinced that one and the same thing can be approached and portrayed in entirely refreshing ways.

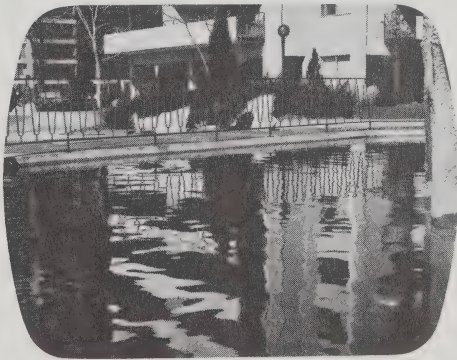
After preselecting a street within a minute's walk from the school and delimiting the shooting area to one block, split the class into three crews. Contract Crew One to record the street from the point of view of a land developer, Crew Two from the point of view of a social critic. Crew Three, on the other hand, will be contracted to shoot the street through the eyes of a child who lives on it. The crews may narrate into the microphone simultaneously as they tape, or dub music and voice-over when they return to class. Each crew should be given an hour with the one portapak to complete a five-minute production. While Crew One is shooting, Crew Two may survey the scene and return to block out a simple script. Crew Three could remain in class to recall objects that aroused their curiosity, or activities that preoccupied them as five-year-olds.

How long should a sentence be? No one would seriously pose the question, yet many inquire how long a shot should last. Other questions such as when do you zoom? when do you cut? are equally meaningless outside a specific context. Every shot is taken to convey an impression, to create an effect. If the shot appears to fall short of contributing to the whole, then it is important to determine in the debriefing the crew's rationale for it. With this set of contracts, the aesthetic elements of composition, movement and pace can be assessed in terms of specific objectives. If the principles of video-taping must be distilled to an irreducible formula, these contracts will demonstrate that the formula is the point of view.



Fair

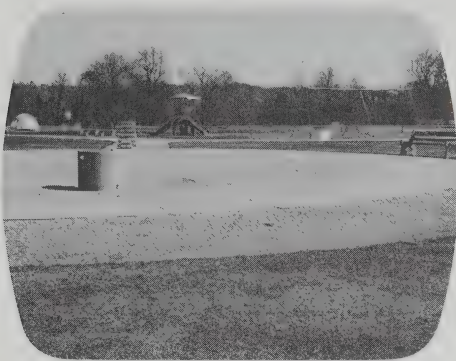
Though the pan is a cliché-establishing shot, commend the crew for having attempted to depict the desirability of the location with its proximity to rapid transit and green space . . . Still, watching this shot is like sitting on a thousand-foot flagpole.



Good

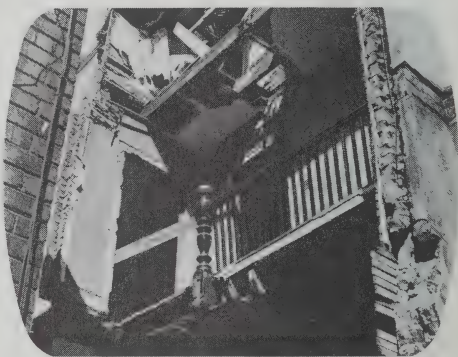
These three shots in a sequence are praiseworthy. Foreground and background merge as one figure relating directly to the theme of beneficial change. In the last two shots, their stock images of water and trees temper the concrete, and the angles descale the loftiness of the apartment buildings.





Fair

Certainly this crew has made a bleak statement by panning a denuded park they assume was designed by an architect who believed that concrete has priority over people. The crew then sweeps in on the apartment towers stacked like mute monoliths.



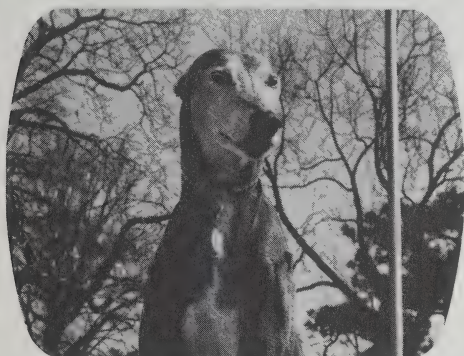
Good

This slow tilt down is an excellent statement of the mindless destruction by urban redevelopers. The metaphorical climax of the door leading nowhere is a concept that would likely require emphasis by voice or music dubbing.





"Lady is my best friend. Faster than a car."



"But she's not as fast as me."



"Hey, there's Mr. Danby. Whatcha doing Mr. Danby? Can I help? Can I pull the rope? Bet I can pull it myself."



The most important aspect of these shots is the travelling at a low angle in order to maintain the perspective of the five-year-old. The innate but oft' masked sensitivity of the teenager will be borne out when they peer down sewer grates, stare at bubble gum machines and focus on puddles with the portapak.

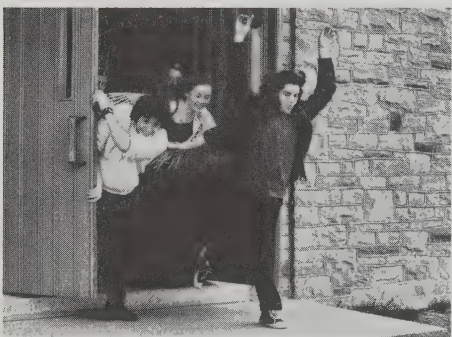
There's Always a Charlie's Group



10.03 a.m.
"Tape *one* street from a social critic's view?!"



10.04 a.m.
"Like, we can tape the pulse of the whole city."

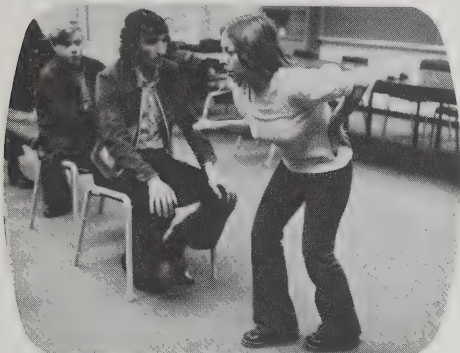


10.05 a.m.
"Sure beats Shakespeare."

All the Lonely People

One of the most obvious areas of study for use of the portapak is drama. But, don't tape the school play! By all means, let the actors see and hear themselves during rehearsals, when they can work on short scenes and voice and gesture problems. Unless you are prepared to spend hours reblocking the action to get a picture product that won't disappoint everyone involved, don't promise the director, parents or principal a tape of the show.

The portapak is a useful tool for studying character and movement.



Ask most young people to be "old" and the result usually resembles the terminal stages of a chronic disease.



That is for anyone over 30!!

Let the students spend one or two sessions documenting the people of a city park, concentrating on the elderly. Bus and train terminals are other locales where one can find good sequences of movement and expressions of age and loneliness.



Such study should lead to improved acting . . .
. . . with inner feelings of dignity and serenity.

Studies of particular characters and settings in dramatic literature may be enhanced by imaginative use of the video camera and recorder.

Look at people in their environment.



A sequential look at three or four middle-aged salesmen will help a student visualize Willy Loman.



A busy street, or a quiet one, can do much to help discover *Our Town* and the people in it.

A Word Is Worth a Thousand Pictures

Select a short dramatic passage for intensive study or review. Some groups — “Charlie’s” for instance — will want to do the whole play, or a complete act. A scene, or even part of one, is the only practical unit that can be taped in a period or two.

Let’s take a scene from *Macbeth*, Act II, Scene 2, lines 13 (“My husband!”) to 53 (“Give me the daggers.”). The passage, immediately after the brutal murder of Duncan is a rich study in contrast in character and mood.

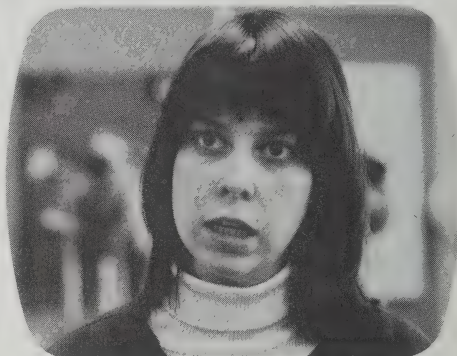
The class divides into two groups and each depicts the same scene from opposing points of view — his and hers.

Lady Macbeth’s point of view

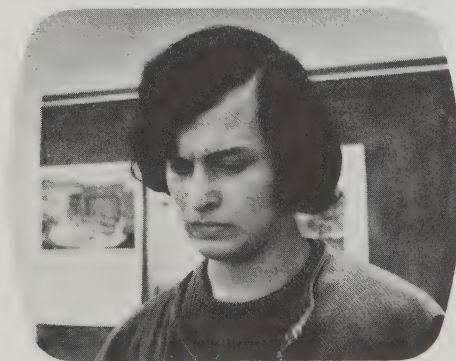


I have done the deed.

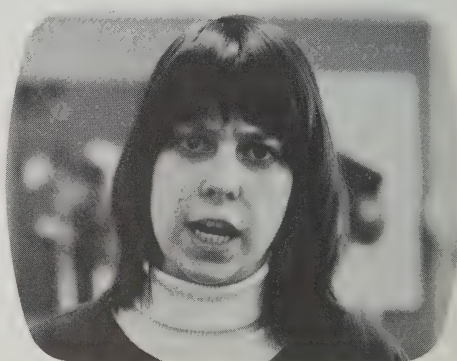
Macbeth’s point of view



My husband!



This is a sorry sight.



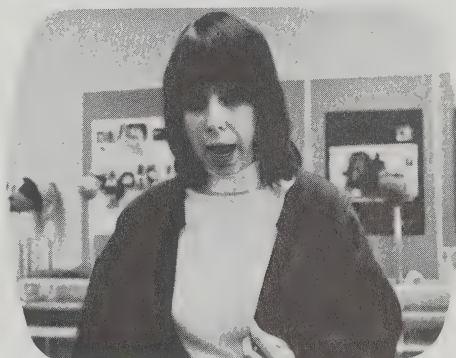
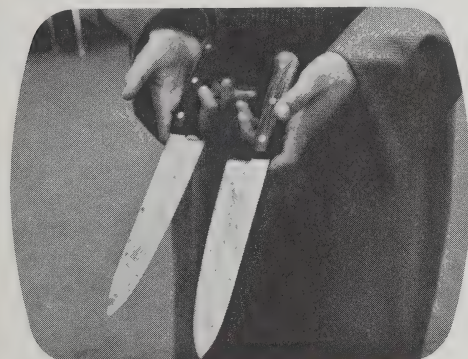
A foolish thought . . .



Still it cried "Sleep no more."



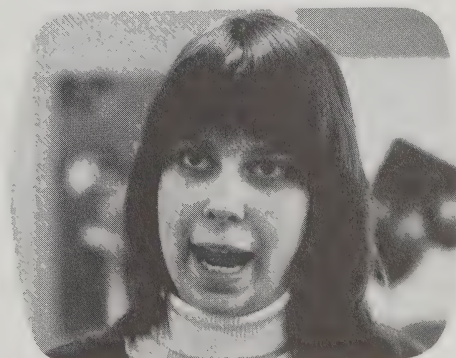
Go get some water



Why did you bring the daggers . . .



I'll go no more.



Infirm of purpose,
Give me the daggers!

Simple props such as cloaks and knives can sometimes enhance the shooting of a scene. This particular passage might be considered a "hands and faces" scene and thus readily lends itself to taping and intensive study.

As the tape is replayed, the teacher and the rest of the class look, as it were, over the shoulder of those who shot the scene and try to see what they saw in it. The producers have to justify — with reference to the play — why they thought such a shot or angle important to make a point.

The taping forms a jumping off point for intensive examination of character, atmosphere and plot. What do we learn of the Macbeths here? Is Lady Macbeth really the calm, evil villain? What has she admitted to us in her soliloquy before this passage? What of Macbeth? Contrast his ramblings here to the passages about the Banquo and Lady Macduff murders.

What are the key lines in the taped passage?

Does Lady Macbeth see the daggers when Macbeth first appears? This question was the basis for a class choosing this section of the play. They blocked the scene twice for stage and then re-blocked it for taping to examine this point more closely.

Even some of the poor readers and reluctant students of poetry and drama may come alive when groups get involved planning, shooting and discussing such a passage.

If the class is large, some groups can plan and script a scene or story with the hand framing method described in Chapter 2 while they wait their turn or day with the camera.

It is important to remember that the portapak is only one means of examining and re-emphasizing a passage, story or poem. With time and experience, there should be improvement in planning, organization of materials, writing and reading.

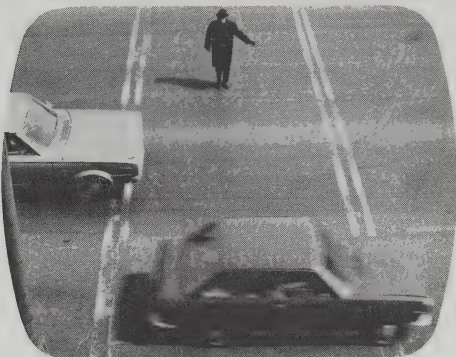
Crosswalks Are for Cars

Teenage withdrawal into a subculture results partly from a feeling of powerlessness to effect change in the community. Participatory democracy and civic action are only slogans when you can't vote. But there is a way to circumvent the franchise — media power. It can give the under 18 a voice in community affairs.

Having an ear to the community is as important as having an eye to issues. Suggest that students monitor radio phone-in shows and collect letters to the editor from local newspapers which may tap the pulse of the community or augur impending concerns. Certainly, if their journalistic topics are going to have any impact on community viewers, they will have to rise above such concerns as the infrequency of school dances or timers for gymnasiums. Go for gut issues. For example, there are mothers whose children must cross dangerous streets for which there are no crossing guards. There are parents in high-rises whose toddlers must play in parking lots.

Predictably, some will be so excited with the prospects of producing a documentary that they will want to report on crime in the streets or tackle pollution in all its forms. Others will want to get a "story", a disguised vehicle for strong editorial comment. Discourage these quickly; they will come to naught. The early assignments should be succinct documentations not exceeding ten minutes in length. "Crosswalks Are for Cars" is a paradigm for a short tape requiring two days for observation, research and planning. After editing, many community cable television operators would be glad to run this type of tape which would vitalize their channel and evoke a response from viewers.





These series of high angle, long shots establish the drivers' flagrant disregard for pedestrians and the law. But, if the whole documentary were shot from this distance, the



miniaturized cars and people would start to look like harmless toys and the audience might even indulge in side bets.



The change of perspective enables the viewer to empathize with the pedestrian. Low angle shots of approaching traffic taken from the curb would make menacing cut-aways. But,



under no circumstances, should the camera-man shoot *in* the crosswalk for purposes of simulating the pedestrian's view.



Objective journalists would record the concomitant responsibility of the pedestrian. From a passenger's seat, some obviously act in a foolhardy manner by neglecting to look,



or signal, before stepping off the curb.

Le doigt dans l'oeil

La tâche du professeur de français est loin d'être une sinécure. Dans un pays qui se veut bilingue, on lui accorde l'équivalent de 90 heures par année pour enseigner une langue seconde. C'est bien peu. Certains auraient peut-être des réticences à envisager l'emploi du portapak (magnétoscope havre-sac) et à entâmer une période de temps déjà si restreinte. Pourtant, et malgré les restrictions de temps, le portapak peut s'avérer un outil des plus utiles dans l'enseignement des langues.

En préparant nos conseils de méthodologie et d'application, nous avons tenu compte des principes suivants:

La simplicité est de rigueur: simplicité visuelle et simplicité de dialogue, tout autant pour faciliter la tâche du réalisateur que pour s'assurer la compréhension de la classe.

L'exercice oral est fondamental dans l'apprentissage d'une langue. C'est grâce à lui qu'on acquérera le vocabulaire, le rythme et l'automatisme nécessaires pour entretenir une conversation. On choisira donc un bon modèle. La répétition devra être intelligente, c'est à dire, utile. Et on veillera à y introduire le plus de variations possible.

Par la suite on pourra ré-utiliser cet exercice oral sous forme d'exercices écrits.

Pour notre exemple, nous avons choisi de nous arrêter au verbe. Nous avons sélectionné 6 verbes fondamentaux: être — avoir — pouvoir — devoir — aller — avoir l'intention. Il y a plusieurs aspects à maîtriser pour bien employer un verbe: les temps (passé, présent, futur), la forme affirmative, négative, interrogative et le style indirect.

Voici donc un exemple de dialogue construit à partir du verbe "pouvoir".



(On frappe à la porte.)

— Puis-je entrer?

— Oui, vous pouvez.



— Docteur, pouvez-vous faire quelque chose pour moi?

— Dites-moi, depuis quand ressentez-vous cette douleur?



— Il y a longtemps que ça me fait mal,
Docteur. Je peux à peine bouger.

— Pouviez-vous marcher hier?



— Très peu. Pourrai-je marcher à nouveau?

— Peut-être. Avez-vous de la fièvre?



— Attendez . . .

— Ca alors!



— Merci Docteur. Vous pouvez faire des
miracles.

The Continuing Saga of Charlie's Group



10.55 a.m.
"Charlie, you didn't by chance forget . . ."



10.56 a.m.
"You mean we got to go all the way back?"



11.45 a.m.
"If the portapak isn't still in the gym, how are we going to explain it to Mr. Williams?"

Monopolizing Simulation

Simulation is a designed situation which involves people in the process of experiencing and understanding reality by having them participate in a model of the real world. No further ahead for the definition? All right . . . do you remember landing on Boardwalk when your opponent held four apartments on the property? Then you experienced bankruptcy before you had your first paper route and were scourged by speculation without having lived through the Depression. Now that you know what simulation is after all, you might consider using in the classroom, simulation games developed to meet some of the objectives of your course of studies.

The game Earth Cooperative* is designed to offer students a chance to understand their own attitudes and reactions to the issue of goods distribution in an abundant society. At the start of the game, each player is allotted a different number of trading pieces (coloured beads) and each is given both an individual and group goal. By the end of the game, if the entire group has not achieved its goal, the success of the individual goal is cancelled. Either everyone wins or everyone loses. Hopefully during the debriefing, the students can draw analogies to the real world and apply to society what they abstract from the game experience.

*For information, write to:

R. Dlugosz
Arizona State University
Farmer Education Building
Office 414E
Tempe, Arizona 85281
U.S.A.

The portapak is useful in the debriefing because it enables the participant to perceive himself in his relationship to the group. Aside from conducting the game for its inherent value, simulation provides a simple situation wherein the students learn how to videotape events, record behaviour, conduct interviews, etc. The cameraman and an assistant carrying the recorder should be briefed in the game objectives and expectant behaviour (such as individuals who isolate themselves, those who cluster and apparent leaders). The teacher who acts as the control and debriefer then uses the portapak to prompt a free flow of discussion.

Playback and Debriefing Questions



What were your feelings about the game at this stage?



What were your feelings toward your fellow players?



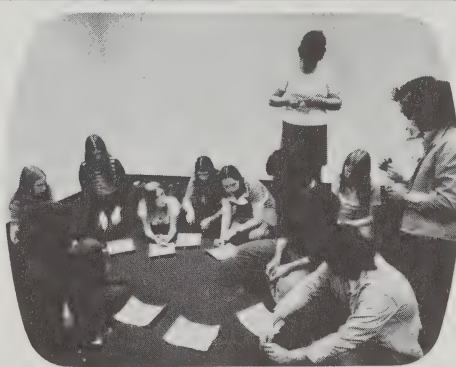
Having achieved your goal, how did you feel?



What are your hands expressing?



How did you feel towards the leader?



What change has the group undergone at this stage?

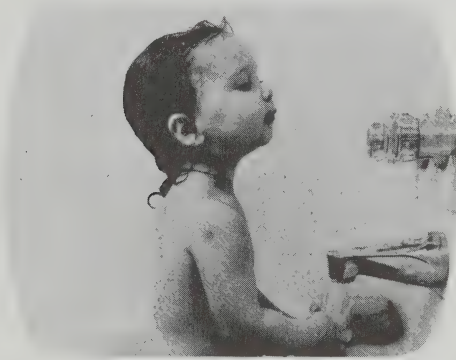
These early debriefing questions will lead to generalizations about real life situations.

Closely Watched Children

An enlightening project for some students in Grades 11 to 13 family life courses is the study of the most ingenuous and co-operative member of the family unit — the child. While libraries are replete with treatises on early childhood behaviour and magazines with parapsychological articles on child care, it is rather edifying to watch children. Ignorance is distributed when students draw conclusions and report “characteristic behaviour” back to the class, after a day or two at the nursery, or only a few evenings of babysitting.

Groups of three students might be interested in a comparative video presentation on the characteristic behaviour of children representing three distinct stages of development — for example, one, two and three years of age. Each group should unobtrusively observe one child for a specified period of the day for at least a week, during which time they would take notes. After a pattern of behaviour emerges or a routine is discernible, the students could block out segments which they will record.

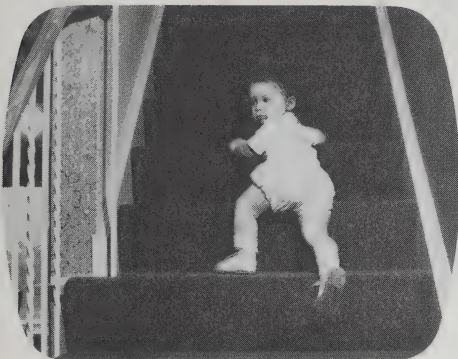
The guidance of a mother whose level-headedness is demonstrable by the social adjustment of an older child she has raised, is of paramount importance for the students. Ideally, this mother would indicate what responses displayed by the child typify the norm and what activities are advanced or slow in developing. If the tapes are to contain only the prattle of the child, the teacher must insist on very simple objectives. Documenting the routine of the child as she explores and reacts to her surroundings is such an objective. The contract would enable the group as producer and the class as audience to come to a fuller understanding of the nature of the child.



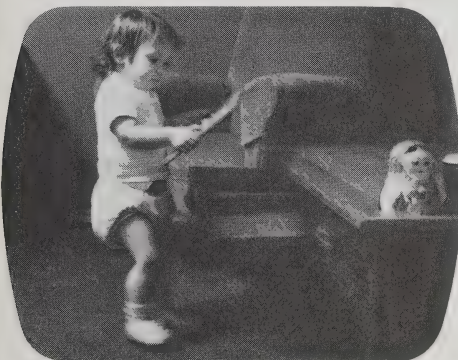
Fifteen-month-old Elaine's bath is a learning opportunity. Her mother takes a few moments to regulate the faucet in order to teach her hot and cold. While being dressed, Elaine



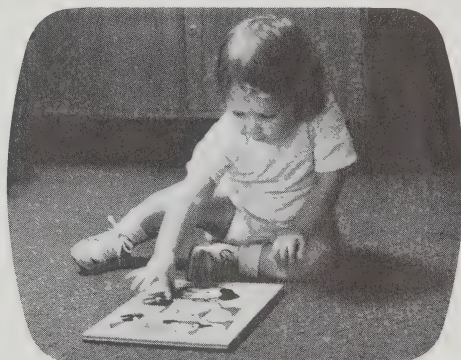
will co-operate by handing her mother the diaper and safety pins.



After negotiating the stairs herself, Elaine ventures out to play with her toys. (This cut-away shot is included to remind the viewer that the home is scaled for adults.)



She has just learned the simple operation of opening the closed drawers which contain some of her toys. (On the day this portapak simulation was shot, Elaine replaced a piece

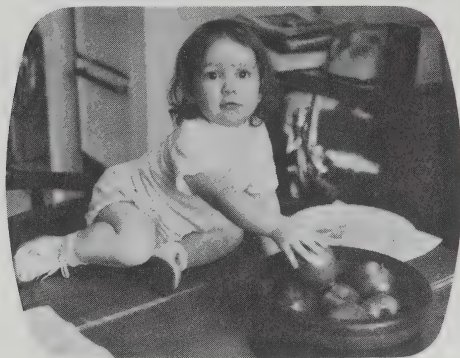


from her wooden peg puzzle for the first time.)



After an accidental spill, she assists in cleaning up. Elaine invariably wants to help her mother with the regular household chores such as vacuuming and dusting.





Elaine shows her budding independence by choosing her own routes and testing mother. She will come to the television set when she hears the theme music for *Mister Dress Up*:



she can identify Finnegan as "dog" — every animal is "dog" — and will wave good-bye when Casey does.



Emulating her sister, Elaine folds her hands for grace. She eats with her fingers but is trying to master the spoon. She will shake her head to indicate "no" for food she doesn't



want and will grab at what she likes, e.g. pickles!



While her sister plays the piano, Elaine will insist on climbing up on the stool and plunking at the keys, but sometimes she can be persuaded to play along on another instru-



ment. Music is an enjoyment to her; she will indicate when she wants the stereo turned on so that she can dance.



Elaine shows remarkable agility walking in family members' larger shoes. Towards the end of the morning, however, if she tires, she



will start to fret and lose her muscle co-ordination.



Elaine loves to snuggle up at certain times and point to "nose" and "tummy", and lines up for her good-bye kiss when dad leaves in the morning.



How Are You Going to Keep Them Down on the Farm?

Scattered throughout the province are battered barns and weathered factories awaiting inevitable urbanization. And, providing one has the technique of enquiry, they have tales to reveal.

Yet, mention archeology to educators and it will evoke one of three images: Leakey dusting off a zinjanthropus; a pith-helmeted scientist picking potsherds in Iran; or a team of university students sifting an Indian burial site. No wonder then, that our 19th century sites are only combed by antique dealers!

These abandoned barns and factories could provide an excellent opportunity to implement an integrated studies program. Not only would Agricultural Archeology or Industrial Archeology relate directly to the study of history, geography, mathematics and science, but an archeological dig could serve as a model for other research and communications projects.

The project illustrated in the following pages was carried out by nine students in Grade 8 for a period of three and a half weeks in January and February, a time when any right thinking Canadian would have succumbed to winter torpor. They spent about a week and a half researching, a week and a half scripting and shooting and three days editing. Video and audio excerpts from their program entitled "The Reconstructed Barn" are included along with the annotations from the consultant who observed the process of their independent study.

Notes

While some probed at the site, three members of the team researched the history of the area at the Markham Centennial Library and photocopied relevant documents to distribute to the others.



Audio

The Township of Markham is one of the oldest settlements west of Kingston . . .

Transportation to the dig and the Markham Museum was provided by a teacher and an interested parent who also served as a resource person.



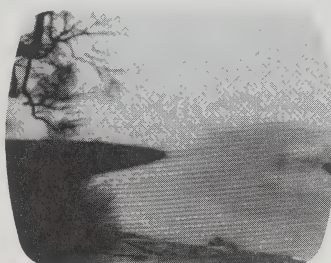
The first year a man would build a temporary shack until the log cabin was completed . . .

The outdoor sequences were shot amidst freezes and thaws. At times the crew was mired in mud to its knees and other days their fingers were numbed by cold which froze the ink in their ballpoint pens.



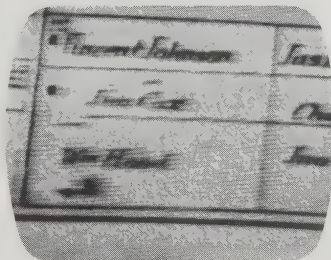
At the corner of Woodbine and Steeles there are the remains of one barn, a demolished house This project examines the story of the people who settled this property . . .

Because the portapak was too distant to pick up the sound of waves, they dubbed and mixed voice-over with a sound effects record of Hawaiian surf.



The settlers would have come up the Rouge River or Yonge Street . . .

A runaround and a lesson here. After three registry offices each claimed the other had the information, the crew finally encountered a sympathetic clerk . . .



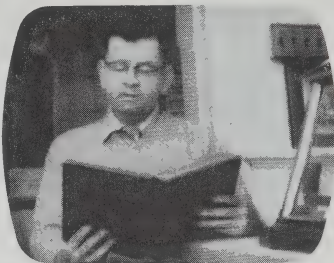
The Toronto Registry Office records that the original owner of this land was J. S. McCauley. In 1799 he was granted 200 acres . . .

After measuring the apple trees on the property which the University of Toronto dated, they asserted that William Hood had planted them.



It ended up that a Mrs. Agnes Ainslie purchased a slice of the property which she deeded to William Hood – Lot 1, Concession 4 . . .

Mr. John Lunau, local historian and curator of the Markham Township Museum, was one of many resource people consulted. He answered their prepared questions and they edited the 45-minute interview to seven minutes.



William Hood is a native of Roxburghshire, Scotland and emigrated with his wife and family in 1837 . . .

A most gracious and hospitable gentleman whose father farmed the property, entertained the crew with anecdotes from the past.



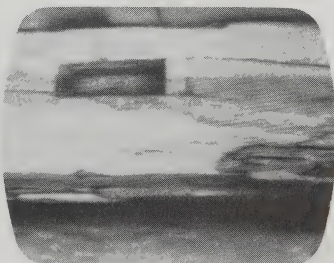
My father was a great plower. He got the prize at Brooklin Fair. First prize, silver cup . . .

After John Lunau explained how people marketed their goods, the program cuts away to the existing tracks and a sound dub of a steam engine.



The Canadian National Railway has laid track over the actual spot where the Toronto Nippissing Railway ran . . .

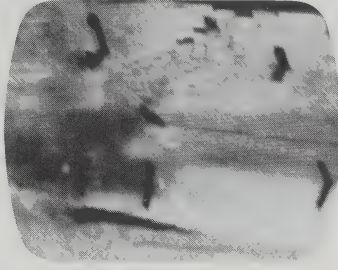
A local resident whose father built the barn has in her possession his book of accounts, which unfortunately did not include the date of construction.



Notice the beam which serves no purpose in the present structure. This barn has been constructed from the remains of former barns . . .

Notes

The students still can't fix the date because the nails have been re-used.



Audio

In barn #1 and #2, we found square headed nails that were manufactured after 1845. These nails don't necessarily provide a clue . . .

A little bluffing here. They still haven't the faintest notion how this device works!



This strange looking object is a hog killing wheel. Although now lying on the floor, it was formerly mounted . . .

They shot brick houses in the vicinity. They assumed that the architecture of the demolished house probably resembled the ones still existing.



William Hood's two granddaughters ran the post office called Amber from approximately 1900 to 1920 . . .

Almost too many artifacts were on this site. Survey equipment and business documents diverted them for at least two days from their original objectives.



In barn #2, there are the business files and survey maps from the Hans Lundberg Company dating back to 1936 . . .

A real find at this site. A photo of one of the deceased occupants was found. They were able to date his occupancy which at first they erroneously assumed corresponded to the documents.



Hans Lundberg . . . was considered one of the greatest prospectors of his time, finding more than 2,000 valuable mineral deposits . . .

The "they" referred to is all of us. Ostensibly emotional, but that is the way they felt after having discovered and lived with a part of Ontario's past.



Wycliffe now manages the property and will be selling to Toyota . . . By doing this they will have been destroying man's heritage of yester year.

And Finally Charlie's Group



2.30 p.m.
"Good thinking. At a hundred bucks an hour, we'll be up for 30 seconds."



3.25 p.m.
"I know it's not an aerial view, but it covers the ground."



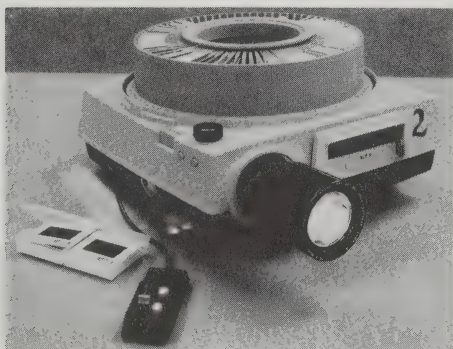
3.30 p.m.
"Shall I throw it out? There's no picture on it."

The Thirty Cent Special Effects Generator

The acquisitive demand for expensive electronic accessories to complement the portapak is directly proportional to the number of botched scripts and inversely proportional to the familiarity with the portapak's inherent components. You are going to encounter the "if only we had" syndrome: if only we had a telecine we could . . . if only we had a special effects generator we could . . . if only we had a sound mixer. . . . All drivell, and say so.

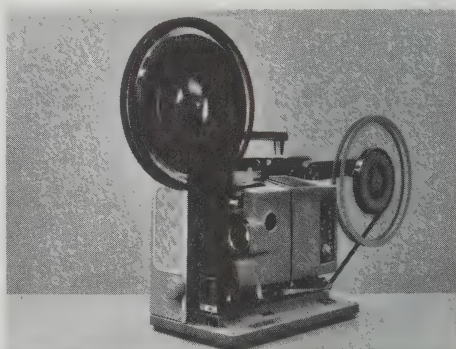
For the transition technique, as an example, a number of special effects can be accomplished in camera with the existing lens: fade-out and fade-in is achieved by slowly closing down the aperture to the C (closed) position and then opening up for the correct level. A variety of wipes is made by moving a hand or dark sheet of paper across the front of the lens. "What about the dissolve?", the students may ask. Unlike film, video-tape isn't double exposed; the alternative, then, is to create the illusion of the dissolve by defocusing. If that fails to satisfy them, try a lame answer — dissolves are slightly out of vogue anyway.

Special Defects?



The still image from the 35 mm slide projected on a screen can be reproduced with the portapak and animated by panning and zooming. The Super 8 and 16 mm projectors come under the category of special defects for two reasons. First, the video-tape repro-

duction will pulse with a soft luminescence because the frame speed of the projector and videorecorder are not synchronized. Second, the students' reliance on stock shots or film inserts will delude them into believing that they have been creative.

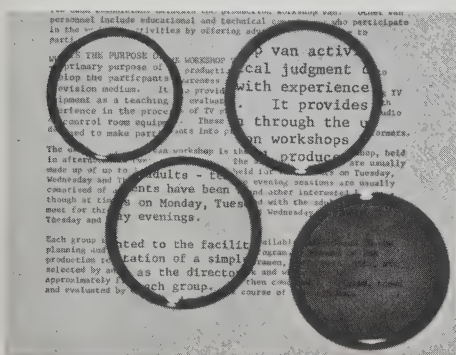
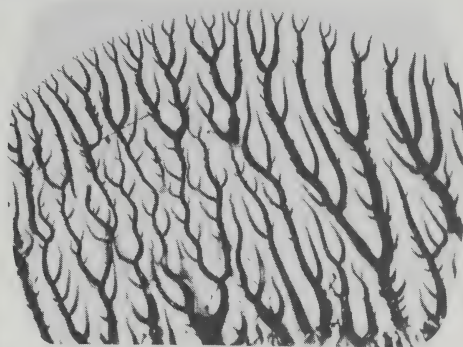


duction will pulse with a soft luminescence because the frame speed of the projector and videorecorder are not synchronized. Second, the students' reliance on stock shots or film inserts will delude them into believing that they have been creative.



Rorschaching

Two pieces of glass, oil, ink, an overhead projector — and created is the phantasm of a forest. The resultant images are so unpredictable, though, that even trial and error is frustrating.

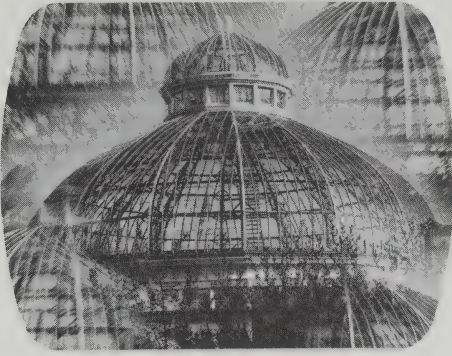


Lensing

This assortment of lenses, screw-mounted to the zoom lens, is available at most camera stores: the close-ups +1, +2, +3 (\$6. each), the vignette (\$6.), the polaroid (\$12.), the multiple image (\$16.).



The complaint with the close-up lenses (especially when stacked) is their extremely shallow depth of field. But, as alluded to in this chapter, take advantage of the limitations. Here the snake appears to be emerging from misty recesses, a shot that would not have been as effective if entirely in focus.



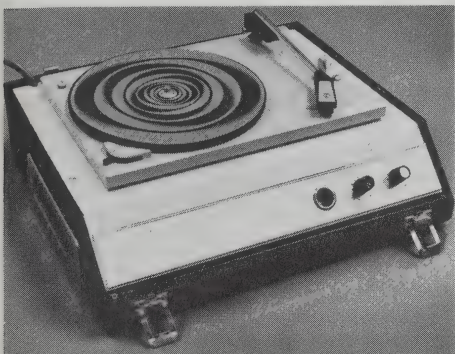
An ordinary glass house can take on the semblance of an ice palace. The image can be spun by rotating the ring on the multiple image lens.



Irising

A thirty cent piece of black construction paper wrapped conically around the zoom lens enables the cameraman to isolate his subject. The shape and length of the cone and the telephoto setting will determine the extent of the iris configuration.





Sound Dubbing

The record player is an indispensable component in the portapak system. Though you can easily dub by placing the portapak's auxiliary microphone near the record player speaker (as well as mix by speaking at the same time), you cannot patch directly from a record player into the portapak. A harsh hum results because the low level microphone input on all existing makes of portapaks is not compatible with the high level output from record players and tape recorders. However, the cost of the parts necessary for the modification is approximately \$5.

For technical instructions and schematic drawings see the Addendum in this book.

Rewind

An important advantage of the portapak is its erase capabilities. More by accident than by design, the erasure capacity of video-tape is a courtesy which can spare an audience from having to suffer through some types of productions — more than once, anyway. Video-tape is re-usable; nothing has to be kept indefinitely.

Before you use the portapak, always ask *why*. There will be times when you are asked to tape events which can be salvaged if the camera operator remembers to keep the imaginative second eye open. The Third Eye will then take care of the rest.

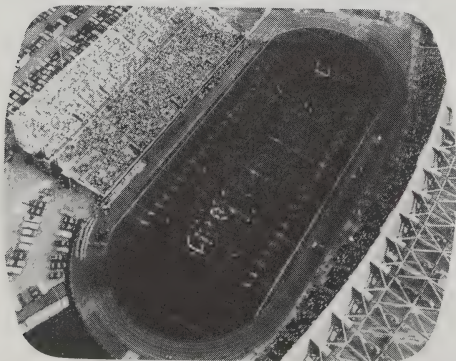
But, for some of the inappropriate applications cited below, be prepared to “No thy medium”.



The parent-teacher meeting



The open house



“The big game”



The assembly



The model lesson

Addendum: Sound Dubbing

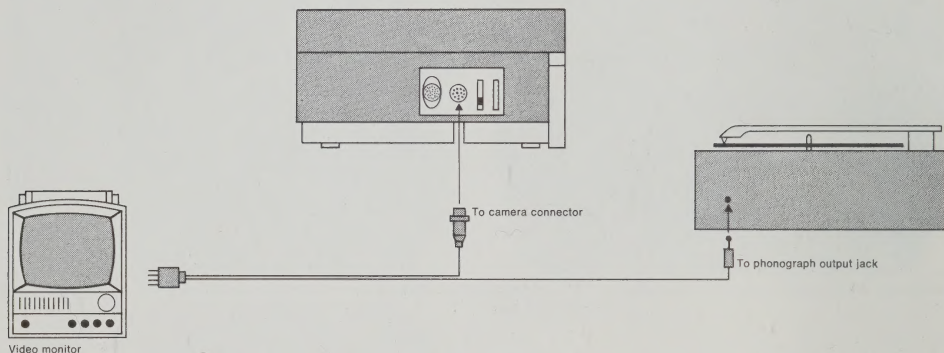
This Addendum contains technical instructions and schematic drawings that will enable you to sound dub with the portapak.

Note:

Before making any modifications to your equipment, have the dealer or manufacturer authorize those modifications in order to protect the warrantee.

Sound Dubbing

New sound (from a tape recorder, phonograph, radio) can be recorded on a pre-recorded tape.



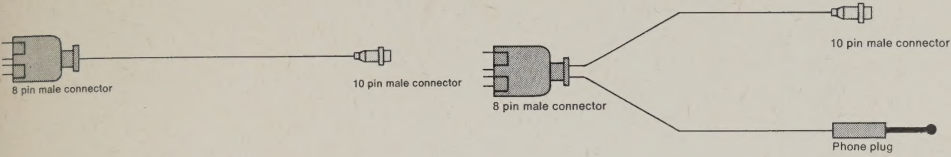
1. Connect the modified 8 pin connector on the video monitor to the 10 pin connector on the videorecorder. The other end of the cable with the phone plug should be connected to the earphone jack of the sound source (phonograph).

2. Playback the pre-recorded tape and watch the playback picture on the monitor.

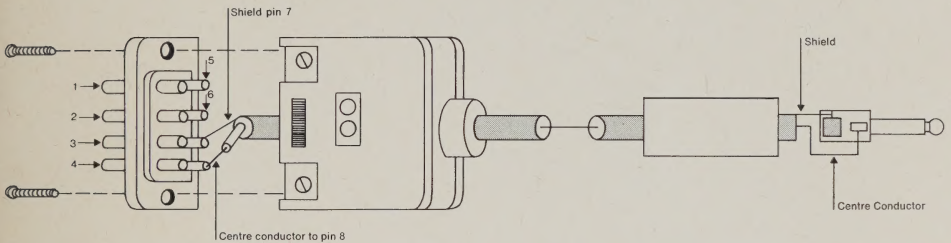
3. When the desired position for dubbing sound is reached, set the videorecorder in the sound dub mode and start the sound source.

Schematic Diagram

Figure 1



Cable Requirement



Audio:
— shielded single conductor audio cable (4-5 feet long)
— 1/4" phone plug on one end
The other end should be wired as follows:
Solder the shield of the audio cable to pin 7 (ground) of 8 pin connector and solder centre conductor directly to pin 8 of 8 pin connector.

If you are using a Sony connecting cable, pin 8 of the 8 pin connector can be easily identified because it has a 56 K Ω resistor soldered to it. To locate pin 8 and 7, remove the side plate of the 8 pin plug as shown in figure 1.

Note:
The preceeding procedure will yield satisfactory results in most applications.

